



## **Proposed Bohlman Road Escape Route / Fuel Break**

### Introduction:

Bohlman road is a 4 mile long, narrow mountain road that serves hundreds of residences every day, yet there are certain sections that would be impassable in the event of a wildfire. The Santa Clara County Fire Safe Council is proposing an Escape Route / Shaded Fuel Break project on that roadway.

### Goals for this project:

- 1) Trim woody vegetation, limb up ladder fuels and remove accumulated dead fuel build up along the roadway.
- 2) Remove large previously downed trees that may pose a fire hazard during drier months.
- 3) Conduct hazardous fuel reduction up to 30' from the road edge to help provide a fuel break and safer evacuation route in the event of an actual wildfire.
- 4) Create a shaded fuel break along the ridgeline at the top of the roadway.
- 5) Educate the property owners along that stretch of roadway as to what they can do on their own properties to make living in the wildland interface a little safer.

### Permissions:

One of the biggest challenges of these types of projects is getting permission to treat the properties. This will need an extensive public outreach project to get the permissions needed.

### Jurisdictions and funders involved:

Santa Clara County Roads and Airports  
City of Saratoga  
CAL Fire  
Santa Clara County Fire  
Saratoga Fire District  
Santa Clara County Fire Safe Council

Map of proposed treatment area:



The lower part of Bohlman from 0.0 (miles)– 0.6 is very narrow, typical of other streets in the area. The vegetation is often overgrown and encroaching the roadway. Several sections have areas where the canopy is low and overhung. From 0.6 – 1.4 it is still mid-slope and fairly overgrown. The vegetation consists of Oaks, shrubs, Bay laurel and various brooms.



Narrow roadway with encroaching vegetation.



Sections of the road have overhung branches and thick canopy.



The middle part of the road, from 1.5 – 2.0 tends to be mid-slope, with moderate accumulations of fuel. The Oaks and Bays are thinner and give way to the more prevalent brush species. The roadway is a little wider but the fuels are still encroaching the roadway and could ignite during a wildfire event.



The upper section of the road, 2.1 – 3.8 runs along the ridge and may be a good place for a fuel break. The aspect tends to be Westerly and is exposed most of the day but the ridgeline may prove to be strategic during firefighting operations. This section of roadway connects to Montevina road and is the primary evacuation route for residence cut off from a wildfire from below.



The last .2 miles of the road are dirt and lead to the locked gate and one additional residence.

Most of the assets along the upper section of the road tend to be private but there are some communication infrastructures that would be threatened and should be protected by this project.



Bohlman road is essentially a dead end road, there is a locked gate at the end of the road that leads out to Montivena but that route is not common knowledge. Moreover, it is a dirt road that runs along a ridge, it is not properly maintained and could be impassable during a wildfire. If nothing is done to improve the conditions on this roadway we should expect evacuation issues during a wildfire event. There is a history of fire on that roadway as well; there have been at least two significant fires in the last 30 years they both had rapid rates of spread and threatened structures. In both cases a rapid response from CAL Fires helicopter kept the fire from going extended and burning homes. This project has been identified in the Santa Clara County Wildfire Protection Plan, SARH-FR 7.6, and is a priority 1.

Regards,

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